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Larval and juvenile fishes of Liberty Island

Abstract: Tidally influenced, freshwater marsh habitat is an important component for the early life stages of many fishes found within the Sacramento – San Joaquin River Delta. Amid possible changes in water development, land-use planning, and levee deterioration this once limited habitat may become more available to native fish species, and in particular, Delta smelt *Hypomesus transpacificus*. Liberty Island is a former artificial island which has been undergoing passive restoration to a freshwater tidal marsh after its levees breached in 1997. The Stockton office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been involved with monitoring the fish communities using Liberty Island habitats since the early 2000s. The results of our sampling efforts from 2002 – 2005 indicate that there were significant temporal differences in habitat use by native and non-native fish species of varying life stages. This presentation will examine beach seine and larval trawl data from January 2010 to present. Based on these data we hope to gain a better understanding of the habitat use by native fishes within Liberty Island and to inform future restoration efforts in the Cache Slough and Yolo Bypass areas.

Statement of Relevance: Monitoring the use of Liberty Island habitats by fish communities may provide valuable information for future restoration efforts in the Cache Slough and Yolo Bypass area.